

IN THE CLAIMS

No amendments, cancellations, or additions are made to the claims, which are reproduced here for the Examiner's convenience.

1. (Original) A computer-implemented method, comprising:
 - determining whether a first company has executed a non-disclosure agreement;
 - determining whether an applicant is associated with the first company;
 - determining whether the applicant agrees to disclosure terms; and
 - providing the applicant with access to information belonging to a second company.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the information comprises confidential information belonging to the second company.
3. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
 - determining whether the first company is authorized to a program.
4. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein the second company is authorized to the program.
5. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein the information is associated with the program.
6. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein the program comprises a joint-development program in which the first and second companies are participants.
7. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
 - determining whether an owner of a program gives approval for the first company to participate in the program.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

determining whether a field representative gives approval for the first company to participate in a program.

9. (Original) An apparatus, comprising:

a controller to allow participants in a program to exchange information regarding a program when the participants agree to terms in an authorized disclosure letter and when the participants are authorized according to authorization data.

10. (Original) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the authorization data comprises data regarding which companies are authorized to the program.

11. (Original) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the authorization data comprises data regarding employees associated with the participants.

12. (Original) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the authorization data comprises data regarding non-disclosure agreements executed by the participants.

13. (Original) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the program comprises a joint-development program in which the participants participate.

14. (Original) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the information comprises confidential information belonging to the respective participants.

15. (Original) A signal-bearing medium comprising instructions, wherein the instructions when read and executed by a processor comprise:

displaying an interface screen that allows a user to enter a non-disclosure agreement number;

when the non-disclosure agreement number is valid, displaying terms of an authorized disclosure letter; and

when the user agrees to the terms, providing the user with access to information belonging to a participant in a program.

16. (Original) The signal-bearing medium of claim 15, wherein the instructions further comprise:

providing an access control interface, wherein the access control interface allows the participant to control access to the information.

17. (Original) The signal-bearing medium of claim 15, wherein the instructions further comprise:

providing a request access interface, wherein the request access interface allows the user to request access to the information.

18. (Original) The signal-bearing medium of claim 15, wherein the instructions further comprise:

providing a display of companies who are participants in the program.

19. (Original) The signal-bearing medium of claim 15, wherein the instructions further comprise:

providing a display of companies authorized to exchange information with the user on a per-program basis.

20. (Original) The signal-bearing medium of claim 15, wherein the instructions further comprise:

providing a display of contact information for the participant in the program.

21. (Original) The signal-bearing medium of claim 15, wherein the instructions further comprise:

managing the information.

22. (Original) The signal-bearing medium of claim 21, wherein managing the information further comprises at least one of adding, viewing, deleting, and updating the information.

23. (Original) A server, comprising:

 a processor; and

 memory, comprising:

 an authorized disclosure letter,

 authorization data, and

 a controller to execute on the processor to allow participants in a program to exchange information regarding a program when the participants agree to terms in the authorized disclosure letter and when the participants are authorized according to the authorization data.

24. (Original) The server of claim 23, wherein the controller is further to request permission from a program owner to allow the participants to exchange the information.

25. (Original) The server of claim 23, wherein the controller is further to request permission from a field representative to allow the participants to exchange the information.

26. (Original) The server of claim 23, wherein the program is one of a plurality of programs and wherein the controller is further to display a list of participants on a per-program basis.